

WRESTLING FORUM

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VOLUME III

ISSUE 1

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CHANGES ARE A COMIN'

Bon jour! Et bein venue à une autré edition de Wrestling Forum, or something like that.

As we head toward our second anniversary issue (that's 37 years in WWF time), we are going to have to make some drastic changes around here in order to be able to continue publishing. Things just seem to take so much time and the added responsibility of spearheading the UAWF really seem to sap what little time I have. Don't get me wrong...taking reports over the phone, opening the mail, reading what you all have to say, and typing all of this into something that almost makes sense is a labor of love. Printing the bulletin, separating, collating, folding, stapling, labeling, stamping and mailing is a royal pain in the keister. During the past couple of weeks, Mary and I sat down and lined out some goals and ideas to help us know not only what direction we are heading, but also to ease the pressures of putting out a twice a month bulletin. As a result, we have some up with some things that are important enough to be mentioned here.

First step is, we are going to hire some help. I will still do the things I enjoy...processing subscriptions, talking on the phone and typing the bulletin. We are going to have a couple of high school kids come in and help with the actual publication though...it's just gotten too much to handle. With nearly 200 subscribers, that involves copying nearly 3000 pages each issue, then sorting them into what is the finished copy. Alone, that task has been taking us about eight to ten hours. With help, it should cut things down quite a bit. We figure that we could hire someone to help with the bookkeeping and subscriptions, but then I wouldn't get to know the names and addresses of you all (thus when calls came in, I'd be going "Who is this again?"). We also figured that we could have someone else type the bulletin, but since I just sit down and start typing from random notes (what you see is usually the first draft), I really think that would lose the "Gallagher touch" if you will.

Anyway, this issue will be the first one put together with help. Hopefully, that will take some of the pressure off and make things enjoyable once again. We're going to do everything possible to continue publishing for a long time to come. besides...who ever heard of someone going out of business because business was too good?!?!

As a reminder, we continue to publish on the 15th and 30th of each month with the mailing taking place the following day. We can't help if there's no one in the post office to do whatever with them after we drop them in the slot (note last issue). Rates at present will remain at \$1.25 per issue and you may subscribe in any amount UP TO six months worth (\$15.00 total).

Just to let you in on the goals we have established, we are setting our sights on 300 subscribers by August and 350 by the end of the year. I know these seem high (but then again, when we started this thing, I thought a hundred people was a ridiculous number). You all can help by telling your friends about us. Depending on how subscriptions go during the next couple of months, we may even resort to a good old fashioned "subscription drive". We'll keep you posted on our progress with the number on the back cover.

The WWF returns here to Peoria tomorrow (Saturday the 16th). This is the first time they've been here since the TV tapings last September and also the first live wrestling we've had in Peoria since I started to work. I've felt almost deprived of live wrestling just from the fact that IF there HAD been wrestling live...I wouldn't have been able to go. I know how much sense that last statement just made, but you should understand.

Well, sit back, prop up the feet, and enjoy...here comes the news....

"SECRETS OF PRO WRESTLING"

Editor's note: This is a review of a new video tape on the market. I'll save my comments until last.

What happens when two guys get a raw deal from a promoter? They don't get mad. They get even.

Well, All I can say is that apparently there two guys were working for a Verne Gagne, only that instead of getting mad and quitting, they got even and made a video tape of wrestling's secrets. I have viewed this tape twice and it is one of the worst tapes I have ever seen. It starts out with these two guys putting on masks and tights to keep their identities hidden. They are then shown working out. To further keep their identities hidden, they have someone else do the talking. The narrator for this is Steve Roy. The first scene is "A payoff at a secret arena". A guy is seen standing in front of a door to an arena and the two masked men drive up and pay this guy to watch so that no one gets in. They then go and demonstrate some 50 moves or so from shoulder blocks to piledrivers; they pretty much covered it. They were split into categories: taking a Fall, Ropes and Turnbuckles, The Big Sell, Basic Holds, Takedowns, Rope Maneuvers, Finishing Holds, and Dirty Tactics. I would like to make one thing very clear. At the end of all these demonstrations, they worked a match which went about 10 minutes with no rest holds. Well, these guys didn't execute these moves very well at all. Either they did this on purpose so that the person viewing this tape could see that the moves don't hurt or they just couldn't do them any better. With the intelligence of these two wrestlers, I would have to agree with the latter. The narrator had his parting shots. While showing one of the men choke the other on the ropes, he said, "and you've been buying his all these years! If we choked all the wrestlers, who would entertain you pencil necked geeks!?"

Really, there isn't anything on here that any smart fan wouldn't know. They pretty much made a mockery of the sport as they thought they were being very clever. However, in the eyes of the marks who may view this tape (I rented this from the local video shop), I guess it would be a slap in the face to them.

At the end of the tape, the narrator said, "Coming soon- secrets of Pro Wrestling, Volume Two. Will these guys remove their masks and reveal their identity? We'll just have to wait and see".

EDITOR'S NOTES

I too, viewed this tape over the past couple weeks. I found it well done with the exception of the opening payoff scene. I don't approve of it being on the video shelves for general rental however, just due to the nature of the show.

I hated the narrator. He was making fun of the people watching the tape and that bugged the hell out of me.

I did learn some things from the tape. I knew that the person being bodyslammed was helping the slammer...I just didn't realize how much. I also didn't know that matches are worked from left to right and that all holds are put on the left side of the body. I guess I just never paid any attention. What made it interesting to me was that after watching the tape, I watched the SNME Hogan-Bundy match. We complain about these guys not being good workers, but still, they do have complete knowledge of the basics and they use all the principles shown on the tape. That impressed me.

I think I know who these guys are that were under the masks. I won't commit myself though by saying who I think they are. I'll wait until Jeff Siegel has a chance to take a look.

The other interesting thing about the tape was that it was directed by "John A. Gallagher". Nope. Not me. Note the "H" in John and the middle initial. I have no middle initial and spell my name J-O-N. Can't blame me for this one.

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AMERICAN WRESTLING ASSOCIATION

For a promotion that has one foot in the grave, these guys seem to have a lot going. Once again it looks as though the AWA is set to make an attempted comeback.

The biggest news would be the signing of Tom Zenk, formerly one half of the Can-Am Connection. He begins this week working a TV taping in Minot, ND and he will be immediately pushed into the role of top challenger for Curt Hennig's AWA title. Verne played some hardball signing Zenk; Tom was under a verbal contract to work an independent show for Sharkey in Chicago, and he let Verne know that. Verne nixed the idea though and told the young wrestler he had to choose between the two, even though the AWA had no dates that conflicted with Tom's plans. One major reason that Zenk decided to sign with the AWA is that he has been guaranteed 12-16 weeks a year in Japan providing he can stay in shape. Working for the AWA is hardly considered full time, but at least he can get some exposure here and at the same time remain close to home.

Speaking of the Sharkey guys, you're going to get the chance to see some of them on the ESPN version of AWA wrestling. They are scheduled to do jobs for the regular AWA crew on the next set of tapings and reportedly they are being paid around \$200 a piece to lay down for the "stars". I have no idea where Verne is going to come up with that kind of money, though I think that I wouldn't go out and make a major purchase counting on that cash if I were the Pro Wrestling America guys.

Bob Orton debuted during the last TV tapes from Las Vegas. He is going to continue the role he last had in the WWF as bodyguard to Adrian Adonis (oh yeah, I forgot...he had that memorable feud with Don Muraco too). He didn't look real awful on the show, but he's got some personal problems that he'd better work out if he hopes to get back to the old NWA Bob Orton form.

We've got a couple of new titles here in the AWA. First, Greg Gagne defeated Adrian Adonis for the new TV title (they are calling it an international TV title) during the last trip in to Vegas. Funny, I thought it was a set up where the winner was whoever got to 50 points first. They played it up more as a tournament than a point system. And naturally, in the tradition of excellence shown by Verne and his foresight, there was no belt to present to Greg on his winning of the title. Don't cry, Gregg...Daddy will get you a belt.

On the same show, Medusa Micelli won the vacant World's Woman's crown from Candi DeVine. I used to think that Medusa was decent, but I guess that says something about the talent of Sherri Martel. Medusa is lousy and Candi (at least in this match) looked like she didn't have a clue either. The end came with Candi holding Medusa in an abdominal stretch while Kelly Kiniski jumped up on the ring apron. He grabbed Candi's hair to break the hold and when she turned around to slap him, Medusa did a rolling reverse (gawd-awful, poorly timed, and mis-positioned... other than that it wasn't bad), grabbing her tights for the win. This match was a good example of why I don't like women's wrestling.

The Midnight Rockers keep leaving signs that they'll be returning. I find it interesting that they can work the Memphis group as heels (and that's being shown on Pro Wrestling This Week and I'm sure the newsstand magazines will cover that turn) yet still come into the AWA as faces.

And finally, I guess we've seen the last of them handing the tag team belt over to Doug Sommers whenever one of the titleholders walk out....Doug is reportedly headed to Titanland to do jobs there. He'll probably make more in a week than Verne was paying him a month.

WRESTLERS ARE PEOPLE TOO

This issue's WAPT is just a little different. Many fans think wrestling started somewhere around 1983 or so. So just to let you in on a little secret, it started long before that. We're going to take a look at some of the out of the ring personalities here of some of the older stars.

This came from a man who used to work at a local TV station that carried AWA wrestling. The AWA had a practice locally of bringing the wrestlers over to the local TV station after their live shows in town for some interviews. These capsule personalities come from his experiences with the wrestlers in that light.

VERNE GAGNE

Verne was the guy in charge and he let everyone know it. He was very pleasant, but in a businesslike manner. If the crowd had been good (attendance wise) he was a lot easier to get along with. He didn't say much about the business, but seemed to be very protective. He didn't even like the camera men seeing the faces and heels together talking. He also seemed very sensitive about his shiny skull.

BILLY ROBINSON

A prince of a man. He was very quiet until you got to know him. After that, he'd talk a blue streak and he was always interested in what you thought of his match. Funny, if you told him about something that looked bad, he'd stand there and think for a minute. If it was his fault, he'd cuss himself out. If though, he thought it was his opponent's fault, he'd look the guy up right then and bawl him out.

THE CRUSHER

This has to be one of the funniest men on the face of the earth. He was always cutting up with the other guys and it seemed that no one got the better of him verbally with the possible exception of Bobby Heenan. Not that anyone really wanted to though, because 1) he was very popular with everyone and 2) he had a tough reputation. He always had time for the fans and would make personal appearances on a whim. He visited a little old lady in a nursing home once because one of her relatives had called the station and left a message that it was her birthday. Verne didn't approve, but not even he argued with the wrestler that made Milwaukee famous.

NICK BOCKWINKEL

Mr. Ad-lib. He and the interviewer would sometimes get carried away on camera and we'd have to shoot the whole interview over again. One thing. I never heard him say a bad word about anyone. One time after a little old lady at ringside had clobbered him with her cane or umbrella or something that night, I asked him about it. He said, "Aw, it just shows that I'm damn good at what I do".

MAD DOG VACHON

This guy was the only wrestler we were actually scared to death of. He could convince you that wrestling was real. I saw the local interviewer shaking more than once when interviewing this guy. Verne would always kid us (I think he was kidding) by saying he had to be mellow because he had relatives living in the area. Yeah, right. Mellow.

We have some more from this reader and we'll share them in future issues. Meanwhile, if you'd like to contribute to this column, just send the stuff in and we'll withhold your name on request.

NATIONAL WRESTLING ALLIANCE

After going with a story a month ago about an alleged bankruptcy, and finding out later that it was not the truth, you'd think that I would have learned my lesson and not print gossipy rumors. But this one is just too good to let slip by. According to reports, Dusty Rhodes will be replaced as booker of the NWA by the end of February by (are you ready for this?) Ole Anderson. At least that's what old Ole's been running around and telling folks. A lot of smart fans will cringe, citing Ole as the only person in the world who could take the talent that Crockett has and do a worse job than Dusty, just based on Ole's past track record with the old Georgia show. Personally, I always enjoyed Ole's angles and stupid mistakes. That was just about the time that Vince was making his big moves nationwide and Ole was losing a lot of talent to him, so in all fairness, Ole was doing the best he could with what he had. Well, time will tell, but don't bet the rent on this actually happening. It may just well be a case of wishful thinking on Ole's behalf.

With the bunkhouse stampede finals just a few days away, they seem to be gearing just about everything toward that direction. Dusty won the wild card berth in the caged, mini-battle royal they held in the Omni on New Years Night. He had been a wild card selection along with Bobby Eaton, Dick Murdoch, Nikita Koloff and Black Bart. The match saw Nikita, Murdoch and Bart all being eliminated at once as they all fell through the open door of the cage leaving Dusty and Bobby to battle it out on top of the cage. Dusty won it when Bobby fell over the top.

So thus begins the comeback. Dusty wants to go out as three time stampede champion, but something tells me that they may try to get Lex over even more and have him win it. A couple of readers have suggested that the end will see Dusty and Lex in together with Dusty graciously walking out of the cage to give his new protege the win.

The undercard of the Stampede finals, like the WWF's show the same night is a little lacking in its drawing power. Hawk will meet Ric Flair for the NWA title and that's about it. I would seem that they would at least put Flair in against an opponent that he could get a clean win over instead of one that you know will have a DQ or COR ending. Think about it...how many clear cut wins has Ric had in the past couple of years? The Starrcade victory was one, and that's all I can think of. A champion should have some vulnerability, but in the way they treat Flair, he seems to never be able to keep hold of his title unless he's hanging on to the ropes or something. Shoot, I'd even settle for him using a foreign object just as long as we got to see him pin someone in the middle of the ring. Credibility has a lot to do with drawing power and unless they start changing some of Flair's endings, his drawing power with the marks is going to be on the negative side of the ledger before too awful long.

Did you catch Jim Cornette's latest interview on the Superstation? He took shots at everyone in Dusty's family in close to a "shoot" interview. I loved the line about Dusty's sister being nicknamed "Federal Express" because when she went home with a guy she "absolutely, positively had to be there overnight." Classic. It is refreshing to see someone do a number like this on Dusty (not only because I don't like him), because everyone else comes out and praises him before they tell how they're going to destroy him. Something about praising someone takes all the believability out of the interview.

The Rock and Roll Express are being counted among the walking wounded here as of late. Robert Gibson has been sidelined with a bad back and his recent return to the ring wars have seen him looking pretty bad.

His partner Ricky Morton is out of action with a messed up knee. It may be a while until we see them back in action.

Checking in again on Starrcade and its aftermath...ON SAT, a magazine which is something like a TV guide for satellite dish owners reports that between 4500-5000 dish owners across the country bought the Starrcade transmission. That seems to be an impressive number by itself, however to put it in prospective, more than twice that many subscribed to the Survivor Series broadcast.

Playing with media reports, I received an advertisement (I believe from Multi Channel News featuring a full page advertisement for the Wrestling Network. This magazine is a trade paper that goes out to the people who decide what we watch on TV like program directors, cable operators, etc (fascinating reading for couch potatoes). Anyway, the ad features Jimmy Garvin and Precious with the following copy: "Nobody captivates adults like the NWA on TWN! Among the top ten syndicated programs...#1 teen comp! #2 18-49 comp! TWN enjoys the highest % composition of the all important teen audience and is second only to Star Trek in 18-49 concentration!" Folks, what we have here is a simple case of statistics being manipulated to say exactly what the person giving them wants them to. The source for these numbers is quoted as being NSS PocketPierce 40 (I have no idea what that means) and that the numbers are taken from a period from 9/28/87-11/15/87. It was right after the end of this time period that the Crockett syndication package slipped off the top 15 list. By taking the total number and splitting it into selected groups (like the teen market or the 18-49 year old composite group) they can make the numbers say basically whatever they like. I guess what infuriates me the most about this whole thing is not the twisting of the numbers (because every TV show that advertises itself in syndication does this and it's generally accepted as standard practice) but the fact that I remember the awful skit with Flair and the mannequin (as do our readers - see page 13, Dumbest angle or skit of the year) and then to see that they were aiming it at the teen market... well, it just doesn't seem right.

In the feud we've all been waiting for, the Road Warriors are scheduled to face off against the Warlord and the Barbarian in a bench press contest on the 30th of this month in Greensboro. Since they've been running the matches that would usually take place after a contest like this, I guess it would be asking too much to just have the Warriors win the contest and the four shake hands afterwards. Something is bound to happen to continue the feud and if you've ever seen a weight lifting contest between wrestlers, you can count on the outcome being some sort of a variation of the same old ending where the heels attack the faces while the good guys have the weights in the air (making them more vulnerable).

Speaking of the Road Warriors, I've gotten a lot of letters and calls from our Chicago readers who seem to be very upset. The consensus of those who are ticked seems to be that they aren't going to another NWA show until the Warriors win the belts. The screw job ending at Starrcade had a more negative effect than the promotion could have imagined. Just once you'd think they'd let the Warriors get over in their "home town". Many of you will remember that I was pretty upset after driving five hours one way to the Bash show just to see them set up an angle with Flair and Animal for the War Games III. This should be a textbook case of how to kill a city.

On a more positive note, they did a very nice opening on the TBS show a couple of weeks back with a match between Flair and Jimmy Garvin. While the referee was down, Jim put the brainbuster on Flair and went for the pin (don't the marks have to seriously consider the mentality of a wrestler who tries for a pin when he knows the ref is in no condition to count the pinfall?). Precious tried to revive the ref (if I'd been the ref, I'd have held out for mouth to mouth). Tully hits the ring and he starts to get rid of her, but in comes Michael Hayes followed

by Arn and then Lex. It turned into one of those good old fashioned brawls that the UWF was famous for. The run in actually lasted more than a few minutes and was a bunch of fun to watch. If they could just keep that kind of momentum going, the nWA could turn itself completely around and pick up a bunch of the audience that they've lost.

I'm also being impressed by the improvement of Lex Luger. His matches have gotten a lot better as have his interviews. It seemed that he was very self conscious about talking and got a bit camera shy whenever the red light came on, but that seems to be fading a bit each and every week. It's not an easy job to come out and do a soliloquy especially with a TV camera pointed at your face, ready to capture every little mistake. People like Jim Cornette make it seem so easy and that's part of the reason those with less talent come off looking so bad. In Lex's case, it really looks like he's trying to improve and that's something he should be commended for.

Are you half as confused as I am? I'm sure they're doing this on purpose, but what's happening is that they are throwing a lot of red herrings out during the interview segments. We've got Kevin Sullivan coming out talking about Nikita Koloff (which I guess is supposed to get us thinking that he is going to turn soon) but then Nikita gets the PWI award for most inspirational wrestler and he brings out Magnum in a very emotional sequence. Then we've got Steve Williams turning heel but Dick Murdoch, who is supposedly being managed or at least advised, by Jim Cornette saying that he's going to accept bounties for getting rid of Dusty and Ron Garvin but Steve Williams for the pure pleasure of it. Then there's the New Breed who we haven't seen hide nor hair of in about a month. We still don't know if they were good guys or bad guys when they left. Maybe they went back to the future to try to figure out the angles we've been talking about so they'll know where they fit in. One three way feud in a promotion is fine, but when they start trying to confuse the newsletter editors, they don't realize they're really messing up the marks' minds.

There's also been some talk about the new fourth horseman. They hadn't considered adding a new member at first, just from the fact that they hadn't planned on turning Lex this soon (I say this because they just came out with a line of four horsemen stuff that they included Lex in...if they would have planned on turning him, they wouldn't have included him only to bring it out just after his turn). But now Flair on a World Wide show has told Barry Windham that if the offer is made (to be come a horseman) he'd better not turn it down.

Speculation department...I would expect Barry to lose his golf title to Larry Zbyszko very soon, if not at the Nassau show so that he can be free to feud with Steve Williams. Steve pretty much made his heel turn as while he was commentating (if you can call it that) on the World Wide show during a Kendall Windham match, he attacked Kendall when Kendall was thrown out of the ring. Williams made a pretty good heel during his last stint as one so I'm expecting big things this time around as well.

Where are Eddie Gilbert and Terry Taylor? Haven't seen either in quite a while.

Crockett has really stumbled onto something good with getting his guys involved in the filming of a sit com called "Learning the Ropes" starring Lyle Alzado. We've got more information on it in the miscellaneous staff section. There are people in the entertainment business who get paid big bucks to make sure their product is in movies (like Maroboro cigarettes in Superman I and Reece's Pieces in ET), so having nWA guys prominently featured every week on a show other than an actual wrestling show is a big coup.

LETTERS, WE GET LETTERS

ENDING MATCHES IN PROGRESS

I think there is a very important point missing on those cutaway endings with a match in progress. If they showed the ending the next week it would give the fans a reason to watch the next week's show. The Love Connection uses this concept. Not showing the ending at all just shows how little Crockett cares for his audience and this is the time they need to give them what they want the most.

-STEVE GENTRY-
-Cincinnati, OH-

DIPSTICK NOMINEE FOR JANUARY

I vote for the NWA and the Road Warriors as dipsticks of the month for January. on an interview for the Worldwide show, the Road Warriors twice called themselves "Neo Nazis". In my opinion, the Neo-nazi role, if used at all, should be given to heels, not to the top face tag team. I hope that the NWA is not intentionally portraying anti-semitism as a positive behavior. If Charles Manson was out on parole and entered pro wrestling, would the NWA use him as a face?

Do you think that Titan should re-unite Bruno Sammartino and Pedro Morales as a tag team at Wrestlemania? Can they still work? Would they get heat? Would their presence attract fans to Titan who would otherwise be less interested in their product? These same questions could be asked of many old time wrestlers--not just Pedro and Bruno.

-STEPHEN MEYERSON-
-Brooklyn, NY-

EDITOR: EVEN IF THEY COULD STILL WORK (I THINK BOTH "LOST IT" AT LEAST 15 YEARS AGO), WITH WMIV SCHEDULED TO BE HELD IN NEW ORLEANS, I DON'T THINK IT WOULD DRAW THERE. BRUNO AND PEDRO ARE BOTH FROM THE OLD TIME REGIONALIZED PROMOTIONS WHERE EACH REGION HAD THEIR OWN FAVORITES. THEY COULD CERTAINLY DRAW ON THE EAST COAST (NEW FANS WOULDN'T CARE FOR THEM) JUST AS A CRUSHER-BRUISER REUNION MIGHT DO ALRIGHT IN CHICAGO BUT NO WHERE ELSE THAN THE MIDWEST. TITAN HAS PICKED UP ON THIS ASPECT IN MANY MARKETS...FOR EXAMPLE AROUND THESE PARTS THEY'VE BEEN USING NICK BOCKWINKEL AS A SPECIAL REFEREE.

TURN ABOUT IS FAIR PLAY

Being a big fan of the NWA and the Crockett family as well, I would hope that jim Crockett sees this letter and can do something about a situation that is developing among his top wrestlers. I stumbled across this a few weeks ago and it could really shake the NWA down for good.

When there's a big card at the Civic Arena here in Pittsburgh (be it WWF or NWA) the majority of the wrestlers usually go to the Quality Inn (near the Greater Pittsburgh Airport) after the matches for some drinks, lively atmosphere, and dancing. I occasionally go there myself for the same reasons as well as to see a few wrestlers. Well, last month, after an NWA card, I went there later than usual (about midnight). The place wasn't crowded at all and I didn't see any wrestlers. The bartender told me that many of the wrestlers had gone in the "backroom" which is kind of a dining area. I went back there and sure enough, all of the wrestlers were by themselves at the back of the room. Because of the seating arrangements, I couldn't see any of their faces, and only a few of their backs.

I sat down at a table kind of close to them to hear what the conversation was about. Actually, It was one guy talking and the other 10-12 listening. I recognized the voice, but I couldn't place who it was. Anyway, he was talking about Titan Sports. I can't recall the exact words of the conversation, but the topic was about all of these guys leaving Crockett for good. A mass exodus to bury Crockett for good. The deal was that it had to be all (or most) of the guys leaving together;

one or two defections wouldn't work. The other wrestlers interjected now and then, asking questions concerning pay, use of the blade, and then trying to persuade others to join.

Needless to say, I was pretty amazed. I wanted to see who all the wrestlers involved were and who was this guy who seemed to be the leader. After about 10 minutes I got my answer. As all the wrestlers got up to leave, I saw the leader. I couldn't believe who it was! It was none other than...JON! CAN YOU BELIEVE THIS! I'M OUT OF TIME! I GOTTA GO! You'll have to wait until next time to find out who it was! See Ya next week!

-MIKE VIOLA-
-Pittsburgh, PA-

EDITOR: THIS IS OBVIOUSLY A FICTIONAL ACCOUNT OF SOMETHING THAT NEVER HAPPENED, BUT A GOOD POINT IS MADE ABOUT THOSE SILLY MATCHES THAT END IN PROGRESS EACH AND EVERY WEEK.

SOME ANSWERS

Your editorial on how Starrcade could have hurt the WWF Survivor Series by going to TBS and broadcasting it free had some excellent points. However there were several factors which kept this from happening. First, we would have lost the revenue from not only Starrcade's pay per view audience, but also from the sales of the video tape which recently went on sale. We really don't believe that option would have worked either because those who wanted to see both shows would have simply used a video recorder. Because of that fact alone, we would not have been able to put any kind of a dent in the success of SS. Titan's very aggressive actions with their legal maneuvering has not only hurt them enough on its own, but people within the cable industry are now wondering what they are so afraid of. This one move by Titan has gotten us more free publicity within the broadcast industry than we ever could have gotten through hyping our own product. The same goes for when they go head to head with us on the 24th of this month. Everytime they get cute and try to outflank us, it makes people who make decisions in programming sit up and take notice of the NWA. We like that idea.

-NAME WITHHELD-
by request

ONE GOOD THING ABOUT THE SHAMMIES

Okay. You didn't take my advise and you came down hard on the Shammies. Still...you have to admit...they did give you an opportunity to come up with some of the best one liners you ever have.

-ERIC HOYME-
-Indianapolis, IN-

A COUPLE OF QUESTIONS

I'm just curious and maybe a few other readers would be too. How old are you, how old were you when you first started watching wrestling, what was the first match you went to and who is your all time favorite wrestler?

-MIKE FREY-
-Glen Ellyn, IL-

EDITOR: I'M TWENTY-NINE, NOW AND FOREVER MORE. I STARTED WATCHING WRESTLING IN ABOUT 1962 OR 1963 WITH MY DAD AND BROTHER LATE ON SATURDAY NIGHTS. THE FIRST LIVE MATCHES WE WENT TO WERE NWA SANCTIONED MATCHES IN PEORIA, IL IN ABOUT 1969 OR SO. ON THE CARD WERE BOB GEIGEL AND BOB BROWN (WHO WERE TAG TEAM CHAMPS), EARL MAYNARD, THE LATE VIKING AND PAT O'CONNOR. STRANGE THAT THE FIRST MATCHES I WENT TO WAS AN NWA CARD WHEN THE AWA WAS OUR "HOME TEAM". COULD THIS HAVE BEEN THE FIRST OF THE PROMOTIONAL WARS? MY ALL TIME FAVORITE IS THE CRUSHER WITH BILLY ROBINSON A CLOSE SECOND.

The following is a prime example of brilliant booking. Last issue we told about an upcoming King of the Ring tournament where the winner would get a diamond ring worth "\$ 5,000" or so. Foregoing all rules of wrestling, they had the tournament finals come down to four (sount em, FOUR) babyface wrestlers. How the hell do you book that without doing the obvious? Here's what happened.

Bill Dundee was matched against Jeff Jarrett. Everyone KNEW that Dundee would turn heel. He didn't. Neither did Jeff. They had a typical babyface match with tempers flaring only a little. Dundee won the match on a count out when Hector Guerrero (who was hiding under the ring) held onto Jeff's leg so he couldn't get bbck in the ring. Dundee didn't see it so it maintained his babyface status at the same time as keeping the Jeff-Hector feud very much alive.

Next up was Scott Hall against Jerry Lawler. Scott was supposedly the Florida representative having won a regional tournament down there. So much for honest here in this promotion. Anyway, Jerry won the match with neither turning heel when Scott used a piledriver on him. Scott, being from Florida, didn't know that the piledriver is outlawed in Memphis. Both guys remain faces and Lawler advances to meet Dundee.

This match was one of their classic brawls with the ref going down once. The end saw Lawler and Dundee colliding in the middle of the ring. Dundee collapsed as Lawler rebounded off him, into the ropes, and himself collapsed, but on top of Dundee. The ref, who was just recovering from his earlier bump counted the pinfall. Both remain faces and lawler wins the ring. We should point out here the intricate timing that had to be used during the finishing sequence. Outstanding.

The next week, during a Lawler interview, Dundee came out and showed a tape of the match. He chose the part when the ref first went down and Dundee went for a pin. He even had a little clock at the bottom of the screen showing he had Lawler pinned for nine seconds. Lawler said that he knew the ref was down and that he was just resting. The result is that Dundee took out his checkbook and made out a check for \$5000 to be put up against the ring. They both admitted that even though they were tag team champs, they weren't the best of buddies. They both are still faces, but Jerry seemed to me to come across a little more as a heel during the sequence.

Lawler does seem to be getting a little stale lately. After his feud with Idol and Rich, nothing has been able to bring him back in the eyes of the fans. He may need to take some time off leaving the promotion to Jeff, Dundee and Scott for a few weeks...just enough time so that his return would mean something. He'd make a fantastic heel, however, with the other interests he has in town (advertising, a TV talk show and other charitable activities) a turn would kill everything.

Hector is getting over well as a heel. back at Christmas time he came out and told all the kids there was no Santa Claus (that would have gotten him dipstick of the month if I'd known about it). The next week he came out with a piñata and told Lance he was going to show him how they had Christmas in Mexico. He blindfolded Lance and let Lance break the piñata. It was filled with flour and it got all over Lance. Later in the show, Jeff had a match with Hector and Lance brought out a sack of flour for jeff to use on Hector. Hey, now that's rasslin' Memphis style.

Rockers are over as heels like nothing you've ever seen. Shawn Michaels is especially obnoxious and the fans hate em. In Nashville recently, Shawn put up a fuss backstage about working in front of such a small crowd (gee, don't they work the AWA occasionally?) but he finally did and in their match with Bill Dundee and Scott Hall, Dundee put the Rockers in their place. He took both of em outside and shut the door behind them. I guess you should know they were out there in just their wrestling gear and it was only six degrees above zero. The Rockers were very agreeable when they finally came back in.

YEAR END AWARDS

THE BEST (AND WORST) OF 1987

Here are the results of the 1987 year end awards as voted on by the readers of Wrestling Forum. The voting began on November 15 and ended on New Year's eve. Any event between 12-1-86 and 12-31-87 were eligible, although those events in the latter half of December wouldn't have had the time to make impact enough to make our lists.

Voting this year was more than double what it was last year. In total, 94 ballots were cast (as compared to 44 last year). Our readership has just about doubled from last year so the increase is proportional.

Complete results can be found in the Wrestling Forum Yearbook which should be ready by the second week of February. Listed here are the individual winners of each category and the point totals for each. Thanks to all who voted and voiced their opinion.

WRESTLER OF THE YEAR

Ric Flair

139 points

ROOKIE OF THE YEAR

Shane Douglas

154 points

PROMOTION OF THE YEAR

Titan Sports (WWF)

206 points

WORST PROMOTION OF THE YEAR

World Class Championship Wrestling

184 points

TAG TEAM OF THE YEAR

Stan Lane and Bobby Eaton

174 points

MOST OVERRATED WRESTLER

Hulk Hogan

106 points

MOST UNDERRATED WRESTLER

Curt Hennig

88 points

MATCH OF THE YEAR

Randy Savage vs Rick Steamboat

March 29, 1987 WRESTLEMANIA III

Detroit Michigan

153 points

ANNOUNCER OF THE YEAR

Jim Ross

195 points

COLOR COMMENTATOR OF THE YEAR

Jesse Ventura

265 points

JOBBER OF THE YEAR

Brady Boone

185 points

BEST ANGLE OR FEUD OF THE YEAR

Jerry Lawler vs Austin Idol and Tommy Rich

129½ points

DUMBEST ANGLE OR FEUD OF THE YEAR

Ric Flair's preparations for his dream date with the mannequin
113 points

WORST WRESTLER OF THE YEAR

Junkyard Dog
126 points

BEST BABYFACE

Hulk Hogan
256 points

BEST HEEL

Terry Taylor
130 points

MANAGER OF THE YEAR

Jim Cornette
222 points

DIPSTICK OF THE YEAR

Dusty Rhodes
151 points

BEST TV SHOW

NBC's Saturday Night's Main Event
125 points

MOST IMPROVED WRESTLER OF 1987

Big Bubba Rogers
103 points

BEST FINISHING MANEUVER

Paul Diamond-Pat Tanaka and the Slingshot DDT
62 points

WORST FINISHING MANEUVER

Hulk Hogan's Leg Bomb
111 points

BEST INTERVIEW

Jim Cornette
176½ points

MOST DISGUSTING EVENT OF 1987

Fritz Von Erich's handling of his son's death
119 points

BEST REFEREE

Tommy Young
170 points

BEST NEWSSTAND MAGAZINE

Pro Wrestling Illustrated
153 points

BIGGEST SHOCK OF THE YEAR

the sale of the Universal Wrestling Federation
131 points

WORST ANNOUNCER

David Crockett
158 points

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MY TRIP TO JAPAN PART II

BY JEFF BOWDREN

Finally we take a look at ALL JAPAN WOMEN'S WRESTLING. which may be the most efficient and best run promotion in the world. This group has almost no Americans touring for it (in truth, most Americans aren't good enough to tour for it) with the notable exception being Ietani Kai. The group was one of the first to realize the similarities between wrestling and music and has blended the two more successfully than any other promotion. Most of the babyfaces are also pop singers, some with really good music (though obviously they are sung in Japanese). This group is also directed at a very select audience, that being teenage girls. These girls may be the most fanatical in the world, literally living and dying on every move their favorites make. Going to a girls card, it's almost as much fun to watch the fans as it is to watch the matches. The most popular star in the group is Chigusa Nagoyo, who may be the best worker in the world right now (no joke, she's fantastic). The little girls at the matches are all in some sort of Chigusa fan club and they all wear their jackets (we're talking the nice satin ones that go for a bout 80 bucks in the stores) and spend big money at the souvenir stands. In my opinion, Chigusa is over twice as much as a babyface than Hogan, just with a more limited audience. Within their core of fans, Chigusa is god. Top babyfaces for the group are Chigusa (besides being the top wrestler with the group she is also like the Madonna of Japan...she's had numerous top ten albums), Lioness Asuka (with Chigusa, she is one half of the "Cruch girls", the most famous women's tag team of all time and roughly the female British Bulldogs), Yukari Ohmuri (former women's champion), Dêvil masami (just retired and also a former women's champ), the Jumping Bomb Angels (Itsuki Yamazaki & Noriyo Tateno...if you haven't heard of these two you've been in a cave the last 6 months) and the New Yorkers (Yumi Ogura - Jon's favorite - & Kazue Nagahori). Top heels for the group all side with the legendary "Dump" matsumoto. The Dumpster is simply one of the most awesome visual spectacles in all of wrestling. She is sort of like a cross between the Road Warriors and bruiser Brody. She's about 5'4 and weighs in at a good 220. She has a bleached blond mohawk, comes to the ring in an all leather jacket and hat with reflector sunglasses. She also wields a 5 foot kendo stick which she regularly swings at fans and camera men. She sometimes appears with a swastika printed on her forehead and usually has a variety of other printed tattoos (they aren't permanent - I think she paints them on before the match). The bottom line is that Dump is fantastic on TV and even better live. The girls on her side include Bull nakano & Condor Saito (current world's tag champs). Most of the other women come off as sort of a weak imitation of Dump including Kaoru Kage, Megumi Nakamae and Kumiko Iwamoto (who sort of looks like a big Condor). Like the men, this group likes to have matches between heels and also between babyfaces. Some of the most famous matches in this group's history have been the ones between Chigusa and Lioness. Dump and Bull have also had some memorable matches, most of them bloodbaths. This group is also different from the American women in the fact that in big matches, some of the groups big stars will use the blade.

We went to see the girls at Korauken Hall, which is a 2000 seat auditorium in the middle of an office building. They film most of their TV shows there and it's a great building to watch wrestling since there are really no bad seats (come to think of it most of the buildings we were in were like that). We got there about 90 minutes before the show started and spend about a half an hour at the souvenir stand before the rush started. I personally spent about \$85 and the stuff is fantastic. They have the best souvenir stand I have ever seen. They have everything you can imagine from keychains, wallets, posters, autographed pictures, books, shopping bags and much more. We waited about 15 minutes before the match to go back to the lobby since we couldn't figure out why there were only about 300 girls in the building. When we got there, we were AMAZED to discover almost 1500-2000 standing in line, waiting to buy souvenirs. The tickets were a minimum of about \$25 (maxxing out at \$55 for ringside) and these little girls were dropping another \$20-30 for souvenirs! Within ten minutes the building was full and the girls were ready for action. I might mention that while these little girls are your basic pop music fans with the usual teenybopper adulation for their heroines, they are also quite knowledgeable about wrestling. The get excited at the right times, and are quietly observant when the girls are working on a scientific move.

To the matches: 12-6-87 in Tokyo at Korauken Hall before 2400 in an 1800 seat building (don't ask...it was PACKED). May have been the greatest crowd I've ever been a part of live and the wrestlers didn't let them down. This was probably the greatest card that I've ever seen live. 1) Kaoru Kage over Sachiko Nakamura with a bodyslam. Nakamura may have been hurt because a bodyslam isn't a finishing move here or anywhere else. Kage threw her around like a rag doll (C-). 2) Kumiko Iwamoto/Drill Nakamae (Dump's girls) over Noriyo Toyoda/Megumi Kudoh when nagame pinned Kudoh with a backdrop. Solid pacing and Nakame throws a good drop kick for a fat girl (C+). 3) Bull nakano/Condor Saito over Yumi Ogura (who had a bad cold - she was coughing all over the place)/Reibun Amada when Bull held Amada and Condor caught her with a karate kick off the top ropes. Bull and Condor did lots of great double teaming here, throwing

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a pair of nunchakas in and out of the ring with great timing. Bull does a great kick to the face coming off the ropes that would make Bill Irwin proud. During the match, Amada got thrown from the ring and in the process, popped her shoulder out. As she was on the floor, a group of girl attendants came over and popped it back in which was pretty disgusting. Bull and Condor are a great heel team (B). At this point, there was a ten minute intermission after which Chigusa came out for a one song concert. The reaction when she came out was like something you see Springsteen or madonna get. Those little girls just FREAK! She does her song (which is pretty darn good), and the girls sing every word with her. When she comes out, all the girls 9who by the way, have their hair cut exactly like Chigusa too) turn around and put on their fan club jackets, which were kept in their purses. They all hold up these lights and wave them back and forth as Chigusa sings. What's even more amazing is how one fan club will sing one chorus, then stop and let another fan club sing another chorus. After the concert, Chigusa came out for a five minute special with Devil Masami, who was retiring after the match. Masami has been a big star for the promotion for a number of years, and at one time was recognized as its world champion but has been faded out as she approached retirement age for the promotion (the promotion requires that all girls retire by the time they reach their 26th birthday). Chigusa and Devil worked a good, but not great, five minutes with the highlight being a superplex off the top rope that Devil did to Chigusa. Devil threw some vicious slaps at Chigusa during the match (B-). After the match, all the babyface girls came out and participated in the retirement ceremony for Devil which was truly something to behold. They turn off all the lights in the building except for one spotlight on Devil who's standing in the middle of the ring by herself. The ring announcer begins to give a speech, talking about Devil's career and all her accomplishments and Devil takes the house mike and says goodbye to the crowd. What is really amazing is that all those little girls who 5 minutes ago were cheering wildly for Chigusa and wanting her to defeat Devil, are now crying for Devil! I'm serious! I turn around and these girls are crying! 5) Dump Matsumoto DCOR with Yakari Ohmuri. This was about as wild a brawl as I've ever seen, live or on tape. At the start of the match, Dump runs over and begins kicking, scratching and generally beating the snot out of Ohmuri who is a good 190 pounds herself. She throws her out of the ring, grabs her kendo stick and begins to take he up into the stands, sending all those little girls running for their lives. Dump is joined by fellow heels Bull and Condor who proceed to ram Ohmuri's head into the wooden seats, piledrive her into the grandstands, hit her repeatedly with the kendo stick, hit her over the head with Dump's infamous oil can, crack her with Bull's nanchakas, then drag her back towards the ring. After they throw Ohmuri into the ring, Dump grabs the house mike (which is on) and begins to hit Ohmuri repeatedly in the head (this makes a wonderful noise), then grinds the mike into her head. By this time Ohmuri is bleeding pretty good, but then Dump starts using a fork on poor Ohmuri. At this point the heat is awesome. A group of American fans in the audience start chanting "Dump! Dump!" and the Dumpster looks over at them and starts to blow kisses. After pounding Ohmuri's head some more with the oil can, Ohmuri finally starts to make her comeback. Naturally, the place went bananas. Before she could get anything going too far, though, Bull & Condor jump in the ring, triple-teaming Ohmuri and ending with Bull giving her two piledrivers. Dump goes for the cover, but Ohmuri kicks out just in time and the place pops. Ohmuri and Bull then start going at it outside the ring, with Ohmuri slapping Bull around with the kendo stick. Dump comes out and heel re Shiro Abe starts counting the girls out. Abe is staring at the timekeeper's table and doesn't notice that Ohmuri has crawled in at 17 and counts both Dump and Ohmuri out of the ring. Ohmuri then beats up Abe, much to the delight of the

THE THIRD FALL

This issue's third fall looks at one man who played two separate roles. We'll call him Mister X since that's the name he took when he donned the wrestling tights. His other role was that of a referee.

I might also add the customary warning that before you get ahead of yourself, listen to the outcome of this third fall.

See, Mr. X had always wanted to be a wrestler. From the time that he was a cook at a baseball stadium clear up until this very day. His problem was size, or more accurately, the lack of it. Everyone told him that he was just too small to be taken seriously. Still, he didn't care. Mr. X was more than willing to do jobs for anyone, just as long as he was able to be in the ring.

Finally, a promoter decided to give him a chance. He could wrestle. but he had to do so under a mask. The reason was simple. The promoter also needed a referee for whenever they came to town, so Mr. X would not only get his chance to work as a wrestler, but also as a referee. Mr. X didn't like the prospects of being a referee, but it was part of the bargain. Work one match and referee other bouts on the card.

Few people suspected, even in Mr. X's hometown, that the man working and losing the opening match on cards, was the same man who later would come out in the zebra shirt later in the evening. The secret didn't last long though: Mr. X had a bit of a problem keeping a secret and soon, everyone at work knew. Before long, when Mr. X would come out to work his match, a group of his buddies would sit ringside and chant his name.

Then Mr. X started to realize just how important a referee's job was. He had to make sure that he was looking the wrong way at the "right" time. He had to favor the heel tag teams whenever they failed to make a proper tag yet chastise a babyface team whenever they did make a tag that he "didn't see". At the same time, he had to make sure that he wasn't the main attraction in the match; that spotlight belonged to the wrestlers.

There was one spot though, that required the referee to be in the spotlight. It was whenever he had to take a bump and be out of action whilst the heels did their dirty deed on the babyfaces. Mr. X was able to use his wrestling knowledge to make his bumps look even more real instead of the usual tap that had long been able to take care of the referee. Often, Mr. X got better reviews for his work as a referee than the participants in the match.

Soon, Mr. X quit wrestling and became a full time referee. Perhaps the role that he played had a lot to do with the role that Danny Davis would play for Vince McMahon a few years later, complete with working the opening match as Mr. X while refereeing later on the card.

The Mr. X that you have met here is still a referee to this day. His name is better known as Dave Hebner, WWF referee who (in this editor's opinion) takes the best referee bumps in the business today. And now you know why, because you know the outcome of the third fall.

CALGARY STAMPEDE

There seems to have been a rash of recent departures from the group and it'll be interesting to see how the Hart family is able to cope with some of the losses.

The biggest departure is Bad News Allen (Coage). He had just appeared on the scene and didn't last more than just a few weeks. Upon his arrival he had taken over a feud with Jason the Terrible because Zodiak (Barry O) had left the area. Now Allen heads for Titanland and as of this writing, I don't know how Calgary is explaining his departure or who's next in line for Jason.

Here's some speculation based on some rumors I've heard... The shock waves are still rippling through Japan from the Akira Maeda shoot kick on Riki Choshu. I've heard that Maeda may be fired and if he is, the Hart family is interested in bringing him to North America. This could do several things to help this promotion including give us a believable opponent for Jason as well as having some superb matches with Owen Hart. Note here that I'm not familiar enough with the inner workings of this promotion to make real intelligent speculations yet.

Also gone is Johnny Smith and I don't know where. Word is that he was upset at having become nothing more than a glorified jobber.

For now, it seems that Jason will be feuding with Makhan Singh. Apparently I had said that Makhan is green, but that is definitely not the case. The man is one of the best big men (350+) in the business and his interviews rate up there with Jim Cornette, Johnny Carson and Jay Leno.

Last issue we mentioned that this group is making money with their live gates. We just touched on it but now I can tell you that they averaged 1500 in Calgary and 1200 in Edmonton for the December-January period. Compare that to Central States (I realize this is hardly a fair comparison) who drew 175 to one of their recent shows in Kansas City. Still, both Titan and Crockett wouldn't be able to draw much more than these numbers on a weekly basis ANYWHERE in their respective hot areas. A promotion that runs weekly shows like here and in Memphis, really has to keep things hot all the time, being able to pump new blood into their feuds and being very changeable. They can't run the same feud for eight weeks and expect it to draw. Maybe why that's why I tend to favor the smaller promotions like this...they can't afford to get stale.

Chris Benoit has returned from his Japan tour. He looked pretty good over there and he should be able to fall right back into things here.

Corporal Kirschner (or what ever he's calling himself now) is gone and is working in the Global area of Florida.

One other correction from last time...I had said that whenever Owen took a trip they "injured" him to explain his absence. Wrong. They've never done that here. Guess I got them confused with every other promotion in the United States who does use that practice on a regular basis.

WORLD WRESTLING FEDERATION

The rumor mill is working overtime here folks. And just like a good old fashioned mystery, Vince is throwing out enough red herrings to make Agatha Christie green with envy.

As you know, ted DiBiase tried to buy the WWF title a few weeks ago. Hogan turned him down. Last issue we reported that this was more or less a contingency plan in case things with Andre didn't work out. What the WWF is trying to make us believe is that Hogan is going to lose the title and soon. I'm not buying this for now.

The way things are being set up, Andre is becoming almost invincible. The Saturday night's Main event from 1-3 (taped the middle of December) was not one of their better efforts, however the thing with Andre choking Hogan was extremely well done. I loved the expression on Andre's face with the maniacal grin and bulging eyes. Jesse even set up Wrestlemania with his comment of , "Hogan would be a fool to ever step back in the ring with him."

But now we find out that DiBiase has managed to "buy" Andre's contract from Bobby Heenan and that Andre will deliver the belt to Ted when he wins it. I have had more phone calls from people who really believe this will happen than I can count. Like I say, I don't

The reason i don't is because after the Saturday Night's Main event angle with Andre and Hogan, they guaranteed the success of Wrestlemania IV both live and closed circuit and pay per view. Titan has managed to convince the whole world of marks that if Hogan is dumb enough to step back in the ring, if he doesn't get killed, he'll be after the ultimate revenge. Either way, they'll pay to see that. Add that all to the fact that they've still got two months to build the thing up further and things will be at a fever pitch by the time WMIV rolls around. The other reason I can't see Hogan losing the title is that he doesn't need to this year. With WMIV a sure success, why use an angle that would guarantee the success of WM-V? Losing the title this year would seem to waste an angle that can be held back for a year in which they might need it.

Now with having said all that, we find that the WWF has tentatively scheduled a prime time TV broadcast over NBC-TV on February 5. The show will be broadcast during the prime time as an experiment to see how well it will do. Again, rumors are running rampant as to what's going to happen including the one about Hogan losing his title to Andre (supposedly they will meet in the main event). Personally, I would not be surprised to see some sort of a screw job ending where the title could conceivably be held up, but even more so than that, I would expect to see a wild, out of control brawl with Andre getting the better of Hogan. This could set up some special stipulations at the WMIV show like a "title changes hands on a DQ" match. The bottom line here is just that I will be very surprised/shocked if Hogan does in fact lose his belt. Things will be interesting though.

meanwhile the plans for competing with Crockett's bunkhouse stampede finals aren't going as well as they'd like. The show on the USA network isn't getting the kind of publicity that is common to Titan's usual hype machine. The show as I understand it will be broadcast live from Hamilton Ontario Canada which is one of Titan's hottest areas for live shows. The arena there holds around 19,000 and it should sell out. I don't have a shred of information on the undercard other than we will get to see a Hogan-Andre "debate". Talk about your literary scholars! I also understand that they will be running "dress rehearsals" of the Royal Rumble in several cities the week prior to the live show. I've talked to a lot of people at work (a good place to get the opinion of marks) and none of them seem to be excited about this show whereas they were really hepped up about the survivor series. That alone should tell you something.

Word just in hat the Jumping Bomb Angels have signed on for an additional two or three months on the current tour. Here we go speculating again, but since this announcement, they have also announced that they will oppose LeLani kai and Judy martin (the Glamour Ghouls er ah Girls) on the 1/24 show, I would bet we'll see a title change there. This would allow the Glamour Girls to win the belts back at WMIV before the Angels return to Japan. Again, this is only speculation.

How bout this...Bad News Allen has popped up at the last TV tapings. This is somewhat of a surprise as it's one defection that hadn't leaked out (to me at least) before it happened. He's in as Bad New Brown, and although we don't have complete details on the tapings (Superstars was 1/5 in Huntsville, AL and Challenge was 1/6 in Nashville, TN) we do know that he attacked Sam Houston on the Challenge tapings and beat the snot out of him. For those of you who haven't seen him, he's an excellent worker (or was...something about heading to Titan always kills a good worker's workrate) but he has had a bad reputation in the business as he tends to let his temper get the best of him which has led to some incidents with fans. He was a bronze medalist in the 1976 Olympics in judo, but he never almost never shows any signs of judo training in the ring. He is great when playing the heel role and should have absolutely no problem whatsoever getting over. I've been waiting and wondering why either Vince or Crockett didn't pick him up. He's got his chance now; let's hope he doesn't blow it.

Remember how we dreamed of matches between Ted DiBiase and Ric Flair when Crockett first bought the WWF? Then Ted left for here and we started drooling over the possibility of DiBiase-Steambot matches? Well, from the reports we've been getting, it wasn't worth the wait. DiBiase and Steambot have been squaring off around the horn (with DiBiase winning when Virgil holds Rick's leg) and the matches are far from the dream-matches that we had hoped for. They've still been good, just no where near what they have the potential for. I would still hope that Vince matches them up at a big show somewhere and turns them both loose. I'm starting to drool again...

Well, I guess since the WWF is so large they have to have an angle to suit all age groups individually. That's the only explanation I can come up with for this dumb thing they've got going with the British Bulldogs and the Islanders. As you know, the Islanders took off with Mathilda and now when they come o the ring, Bobby Heenan leads the way with one of those starched leashes that look like you're walking an invisible dog. That part I can take. The part that makes me go for the fast forward button is when the Bulldogs come out and beg the Islanders to return the dog, complete with boo-hoos and sobs. Oh well, this whole thing sure beats the heck out of watching Dynamite share an ice cream bar with her. Yecchhh!

Multichannel News reports on how well the Shammies did...on an average nationwide they drew a 6.2 rating which is a 15 share in AC Nielsen's 15 overnight metered markets. In New York they did a 9 rating with a 20 share (that's darn good) and in Los angles they did even better getting only a 6.6 rating but a 22 share. Translation: Next year's 55th annual (if I did my calculations right) will be even more obnoxious than this year's. That's okay; it gives me a whole year to think up of even nastier things to say about it.

I understand that king Kong Bundy will be taking some time off or at least have his role changed a bit with the promotion. I don't have anything further on this, but it does give me the chance to mention that he's featured in a brochure put out by the Vendex company for the Headstart computer system they have out. The headline across the top reads "InfoWorld calls Headstart 'the best PC system we've ever seen for novice users'. I agree!" with Bundy taking credit for the quote while leaning on the monitor. As if he should know, right? I'm not

sure if John pantozzi sent this to me to show me Bundy in the ad, or to suggest that I start using a computer (as most of you know, I'm scared to death of them). Maybe they just want to show how well the thing holds up with 450 pounds leaning on it.

Paul Orndorff is missing bookings across the country with no explanation offered to fans who attend the matches live. They turned him babyface so that his heel reputation wouldn't affect a bowling alley that he was opening in Georgia and now it's grand opening time. So he's hanging up the trunks at least for a while while he sets up bowling pins. Other wrestlers really should take note of this...Paul had the brains to know that his body wouldn't last forever taking the nightly pounding plus whatever he had to stick in himself to maintain that physique, so he invested his money in something that would enable him to continue to earn a living. So many of today's stars are going to wind up broke because they didn't have the foresight to plan ahead. A lot of them open gyms because that's the only thing they really know so it's nice to see someone diversify themselves like this.

USA Today had some coverage and further information on the prime time special on NBC for 2/5. That date is now confirmed. On the card will be Hogan-Andre (nope. I still don't think he's losing the title), Honky Tonk-Savage (maybe. I'd say chances are about 50-50), and strike Force-Hart Foundation (we might see a turn here). One thing is for sure. this is going to be the show they use to set up most of the angles for Wrestlemania so things will be poppin'. I was told that Titan had originally tried to get NBC to broadcast this event on the 24th to compete with Crockett's pay per view show, but NBC couldn't clear the air time that night. If they had, Crockett's coffin would have been nailed shut.

As for the Savage-HTM bout, I'm almost expecting the belt to change hands as they've run this feud around the country already and I just don't see how they can drag it out much longer. And I can't see Randy going with out that belt much longer either.

Oh hey. If you have a show in your area cancelled or postponed due to bad weather and they reschedule it for just a few days later... your best bet is to ask for a ticket refund. This happened recently out in Allentown, PA (results can be found in the results section), but the show they ended up with was nothing like the one that was scheduled. It looked almost like jobber's night with the WWF signing on some talent for one shots that they haven't used in quite a while. Talk about your A-B-C teams...I think this team was what we used to call in high school "the Zoo Squad". That's the team that the basketball coach would put on the floor whenever we were down by 40 points (which back then was quite often). I think you'll see what I mean when you read the results.

Paul Harvey got generous today and did a short segment on pro wrestling during his noon time broadcast. Most of the short takes he did about it had to do with Titan though he never mentioned the WWF. He began by listing the top two shows in syndication then telling the audience they wouldn't believe what was number three. Well, paul had an old copy of whatever source he got that from because in the last ratings I saw, Titan had slipped to number five.

Speaking of the radio (I have no other place to put this so how's that for being a sneaky way to get it in), I will begin a weekly radio show this next week on a local station covering the world of wrestling for the past week. It'll be a 5-10 minute spot (done live over the phone) at about 9:30 in the morning. For listeners here in Illinois the station is WAIK-AM 1590. Their signal carries well to the south but not to the north. We'll probably cover mainly WWF stuff.

We have a title change to report right off the bat this time. Abudda Dein, on his first night back in the area, defeated Art Burr for the NorthWest TV title on the 12/26 Portland holiday special. Dein grabbed Art's trunks during the pinfall.

Also the night after Christmas, the Assassin beat the Grappler in the cage match where they put the coal miner's glove and the Grappler's loaded boot on poles. This earned the Assassin a shot at the Grappler's title on the 1/9 Portland card.

On 1/2, they announced the title match before the first bout, a tag match putting Dein and the Grappler against Assassin and Brian Adams. Assassin clamped a figure-four leglock on Grappler as Adams and Abudda brawled along the ring apron. Avalanche then appeared wearing boxing headgear and splashed Assassin, supposedly knocking him out. Mike Miller and Coco Samoa made the save and the babyfaces scored the first fall via dq. Assassin could not return for the second fall and the heels double-teamed Adams at the bell. Samoa came running out and the heels fled. Coco continued in Assassin's place and they went to the time limit without another fall so Adams and Assassin--er--Adams and Samoa--uh--the faces won via a one fall dq. After the fall, it was announced that Assassin suffered a concussion and was rushed to the hospital (if this was Texas maybe he could have gotten a bed next to Fritz). Adams was then given the title match in the Assassin's place. Seriously, my guess is that Dave Sierra returned to Puerto Rico where he wrestles as Fidel Sierra.

Also on 1/2, Miller and Rip Oliver had a match where falls counted anywhere. It was a bell-to-bell brawl which saw only Oliver attempt one pin on the arena floor. It ended in a double dq. when both men shoved the ref and the other wrestlers ran in for a pull-apart. Miller kept breaking loose to beat on Oliver before order was finally restored.

Chris Colt has been dumped as the area's manager and Abudda Dein will be taking his place. "The House of Abudda Dein" will consist of former Colt charges Avalanche, Joey Jackson and Moondog Moretti plus the Moondogs will be coming in on 1/16 to join the stable. They are saying the Moondogs' names are Rex and Spot but they are probably Spot (Larry Latham) and Spike (Bill Smithson). If they can let go and be as wild as they were in Memphis, there should be some great matches against the smooth-working team of Scott Peterson and Steve Doll.

On the 1/9 Portland card, there was a six man tag with Peterson, Doll and Samoa against Avalanche, Jackson and Moretti. The faces won when Peterson pinned Jackson. Then, in a post-match skirmish, Moretti held Doll down as "Av" came off the ropes with a loaded falling headbutt into Steve's ribs, which were taped up on a later TV interview.

Next it was time for the title match between Grappler and Adams. After a ref bump, Grappler loaded up his boot but missed a flying stomp off the top turnbuckle. Adams put the champ in an over the shoulder backbreaker. Dein then ran out, grabbed Brian's kendo stick from ringside and cracked Brian across the back with it. Adams dropped Grappler and then was flogged repeatedly with the stick. Dein whipped Adams in for a swinging blow with the weapon, but Adams ducked under, and came back with a karate kick and then smacked Dein on the back with it as the Arab fled from the ring area.

There was a report in the 1/11 Wrestling Observer that Oliver was to be back with Titan by now with his first shot back at the 1/4 Huntsville tapings. However, Oliver still figured prominently in matches around the horn after 1/9 so I don't know if Rip's plans to leave have been delayed or cancelled, but we should have an updated story next issue.

On a final note, the new Oregon state boxing and wrestling commissioner has banned the blade and wants several other changes which have not yet materialized. Just when there is deregulation going on in other states, our commission has to get tougher. One good thing to come of this is there is now testing for cocaine and marijuana and one wrestler has already been suspended for testing positive for pot.

WORLD CLASS

See, I had it all planned out. I knew when Jeff Siegel submitted his resignation from this report that things were going to get ho after he had written about all the bad times for the past year and a half. It was all part of the master plan (Have I mentioned that swamp land I have available???)

Seriously, things are hot down here. The biggest story (and my vote for what tops the What's Hot category in our Wrestling Barometer) is the angle they ran on Christmas. While we were all set to see a new champion crowned, Ken Mantell had other things planned for us, mainly the renewed Freebird-Von Erich feud. Before Kerry's match for the Worth-las title, Terry Gordy came to the cage and demanded his title shot. Things rapidly deteriorated and the ending result was Buddy Roberts and new Freebird member Iceman Parsons hitting the cage to basically destroy Kerry and Fritz (who was there to be handcuffed to Gary Hart). It was your typical Freebird-Von Erich brawl with Kevin finally coming in to make the save, but not before the Freebirds had plenty of time to inflict suitable damage. They went as far as to handcuff Fritz to the ropes as they beat him up. The Angel of Death Dave Sheldon also joined in the fray (can you believe that mark Lowrance couldn't remember his name and kept calling him "the bald wrestler"!). Anyway, as Kerry and Kevin were helping Fritz out of the ring, he collapsed with a supposed heart attack. He was so convincing that I had several people call and ask if it was a work or not. The callers figured that World Class had been crass enough to capitalize on the death of two sons, why not a heart attack. I knew immediately it was a work just from the fact that Isaw how Fritz handled his two sons' deaths and I know that he HAS no heart to give him an attack (there went my new year's resolution).

They played the angle to the hilt with Baylor Medical Centre issuing reports on Fritz's condition (they told me when I called that he was upgraded from critical to serious condition but he wasn't out of the woods yet...fercryingoutloud!) They have since revised the story, saying it wasn't a heart attack, but some sort of a nerve disorder or back spasm or some such nonsense. I say nonsense, but in reality, I did like the angle as it was a desperate move that has brought the fans back out to see WCCW action. I understand that they have sold out the Sportatorium for the first time in over a year!

In other news, John Tatum and Jack Victory captured the Texas Tag titles from Sweet Brown Sugar and Solomon Grundy. Atlas was the co-holder but he left the area and Grundy filled in.

Also gone is the Iron Sheik. He'll be working for some of the independent promotions on the East coast we understand.

the Fantastics are scheduled to return on a more or less full time basis. This should renew the feud they had going in the old UWF BC (before Crockett).

Although I have no actual report, I was told that Terry Gordy was to have won the World Class title from Al Perez on 1/8. If this was the case, it would mark the first time since Chris Adams pinned Rick Rude that the title change actually took place inside the ring in an actual match. Gordy will make a great champion for the group as he did with the UWF (maybe that's why I'm starting to like World Class... it's starting to look like the old UWF), and he's still capable of working up a storm. He's already over as the number one heel in the area as Al Perez and Gary hart actuall were doing babyface interviews prior to the match up.

And finally, if you think we've been hard on this promotion in the past, I understand that the May issue of Penthouse will be even worse on the whole Von Erich family. I'm sure my wife will let me buy it if I promise not to look at the pictures...

RESULTS FROM ALL OVER

12-26 NEW HAVEN, CT (WWF) - courtesey of Ron Lemieux... Dino Bravo beat SD Jones...DiBiase over Duggan by DQ...Raymond Rougeau pinned Islander Haku...midget match...Beefcake pinned Greg Valentine...Ricky Steamboat over honky Tonk Man by count out...Rick Rude drew Randy Savage in 20 minutes...Koko beat Sika...Killer Bees defeated the Conquistadors...
 NOTES: Attendance 6000...the crew headed for MSG after this afternoon show...Duggan actually worked hard in his match with Ted...after a ref bumb, Ted grabbed the 2 x 4 and split it in two...Ted swung at Duggan but Hacksaw ducked it and took it away from him then got caught by the recovering ref to get DQ'd...best match of the night...Tama missed a plane so the Rougeaus flipped a coin to see who would wrestle Haku... Beefy-Valentine was just awful...Greg went for a figure four and Beefy got him in a small package...George Steele was special ref for Steamboat-HTM and ruined the match...George ended up chasing HTM back to the dressing room, then Rick helped him count to 10.

12-29 ALBUQUERQUE (NWA) - courtesy of Jimmy Kellogg...Ron Simmons beat Kevin Sullivan by DQ...Terry Taylor drew Sting...Nikita over Eddie Gilbert...Road Warriors beat Ivan Koloff/Warlord...Dusty downed Murdoch...Lex won the stampede...NOTES: Attendance 3984...no shows in the stampede included Barry Windham, Rick Steiner, and JJ Dillon...heat good for Taylor...tremendous for Warriors...Hawk pinned Warlord... Sullivan was at ringside for Dusty-Murdoch and handed Dick some sort of can opener...Dusty bled like crazy and some of the audience were nearly in tears...Dusty made the comeback using the can opener on Dick... stampede was better than last year's.

12-30 SPRINGFIELD, IL (WWF) - courtesy of Jim Cook...Hercules pinned Lanny Poffo...Sherri Martel beat ?...Randy Savage beat Honky Tonk by DQ...NOTES: only partial results...Jimmy Hart was barred from ringside so "Peggy Sue" took his place...she lost her wig to reveal a screaming Sherri Martel...Liz got involved by chasing Sherri around the ring...a women's tag team match was cancelled because he girls were "snowed-in" in Chicago...did Chicago have snow that day? We didn't.

1-1- DETROIT (WWF) - courtesy of Beth Sackett...Bravo beat Jones..Bulldogs over Conquistadors...Danny Davis beat Sam Houston when Houston was counted out...Sherri Martel downed Rockin Robin Smith...Ted DiBiase beat Hacksaw Duggan...Tito Santana over Bret Hart...One Man Gang won by DQ over George Steele...Bam Bam Bigelow pinned King Kong Bundy...Savage by DQ over Honky Tonk...NOTES: attendance 12000...Virgil interfered to help Ted gain his win...George Steele (aka Jim Myers who went to Michigan State) got a big cheer as he wore an M.S.U. Rose Bowl sweatshirt in to the ring....start time was 8pm and M.S.U. had already won the Rose Bowl.

1-2 EDMONTON, ALBERTA, CANADA (Stampede) - courtesy of Trent Walters...Jerry Morrow/Goldie Rogers over Jon Holiday/Mr. Hito... Hashif Khan downed Randy Thatcher...Gama Singh over Biff Wellington by submission...garfield Portz beat Phil LeFleur by count out...Steve DiSalvo over Brick Bronsky by DQ...Chris Benoit beat Bad News Allen by DQ...Makhan Singh downed Jason the Terrible by DQ...

1-3 SPRINGFIELD, MA (WWF) - courtesy of Dan Reilly...SDJones beat Steve Lombardi...Ron Bass pinned JYD...Bulldogs downed Bolsheviks... Danny Davis pinned Sam Houston...One Man Gang defeated Jake Roberts... Reed over Muraco...Demolition beat the Rougeaus...Ted DiBiase went to a double DQ with Bigelow...Duggan pinned Hercules...NOTES: Attendance 1900...OMG-jake had lots of comedy...Slick tripped Jake coming off the ropes and Gang 747'd him...fans cheered Demolition and booed the Rougeaus... Ted's match was best of the night...both were DQ'd when both hit the referee...the program at this show had the announcement that Ted had bought Andre's contract even though it had yet to be announced on TV... that, for the WWF, is a major snafu.

1-3 ROANOKE, VA (NWA) - courtesy of Larry Lovell... Ron Simmons pinned Tiger Conway Jr....Kevin Sullivan over Kendall Windham...Barry Windham beat Black Bart...Ron Garvin pinned Mike Rotunda...Rock and Roll Express defeated the Shepherders...Road Warriors beat Ivan/Warlord...Nikita drew Larry Zbyszko...

1-3 BALTIMORE (NWA) - courtesy of Fred Naarisma...NOTE: this was a TV taping thus the squash matches...Nikita drew Dick Murdoch in 20 minutes...Sting/Windham won a squash...Garvin and Hayes won a squash...R&R Express won a squash...Mike Rotundo won a squash...Lex Luger won a squash...Warriors beat Ivan/Warlord...Lex pinned Arn Anderson...Doc won a squash...Warriors won a squash...Ivan/barbarian/Warlord won a squash...Rotundo won a squash...Sting/Windham over Tully/Arn by DQ...Flair pinned Michael Hayes...NOTES: Attendance 5000...Dusty was to have wrestled Larry Z, but Larry no showed...Rotundo wrestling as a full heel now with Kevin at ringside...he has a short hair cut now with a Syracuse wrestling uniform much like Bob Backlund took to wearing during his last days as champ...Sting/Windham-Tully/Arn was taped and for a while it looked like there might be a surprise title change...The heels kept doing dumb things and JJ was shaking his head at ringside...end came when JJ tripped Barry...forecast for the area this night was 3-6 inches of snow so they had a good crowd considering that...they had a myriad of interviews, few of which could be heard by the live audience...I wonder if they got as tired of seeing squash matches as I did typing the word.

1-9 ALLENTOWN, PA (WWF) - courtesy of Gary Howeter...David Sammartino pinned John Valiant (B)...Outback Jack over George Skaalund (C)...Jim Powers over Steve Lombardi (C)...Dan Spivey beat Scott Casey (C)...JYD downed Hercules (B)...Paul Roma pinned Barry Horowitz (C)...Bees beat the Bolsheviks (B)...JYD won a battle royal...NOTES: Attendance 800...this card was originally scheduled for 1/7 but was postponed due to the weather...obviously they used anyone who wasn't working anywhere else was called in...whens the last time you heard some of these names? Gary was "very generous" (his words) when handing out the grades on this card.

THIRD FALL UPDATE

In the December 15 issue we told you about the time Verne Gagne's AWA title belt was stolen from ringside by a fan. Here's a further update on that story:

The belt was recovered in December of 1975, five months after it was stolen. The man was caught and sentenced to a five year prison term. He was charged with larceny over \$20.00 on 12/17/75. Verne said the belt was worth \$10,000. The belt was appraised at \$800.00. It supposedly contained eight three quarter carat diamonds and rubies, but a jeweler said that they were man made.

And now you know the real outcome of the third fall.

MISCELLANEOUS STUFF

Last issue's trivia question was "what was the name of the predecessor to Piper's Pit and who hosted the show?". The answer was Victory Corner and the host was Robert deBord. This issue's question is this: An old magazine called Wrestling Monthly featured a comic strip called The Patriot. It was about a masked wrestler whose parents had been killed wrestling. He fought for truth, justice, and (oops, that's another guy). The question is, "who was the artist for the strip?". Answer next time.

A little personal stuff here...for those of you who would like to get a glimpse of Knoxville, it may be possible in about March and providing you have a satellite dish. Knoxville high School has a great boy's basketball team this year and look to be headed for the state palyoffs. As I write this they are 12-0 and are winning their games by an average of 28 points. Knoxville's a small town and we don't get this kind of attention very often, so we're extremely proud. State playoffs are broadcast via satellite so dish owners can pick them up. For those interested, I'll keep you informed. (My new help insisted that I mention this).

Fred Wall phoned in a report from Canada on the taping of the sit com "Learning the Ropes". Things have changed just a bit from our first report. Lyle Alzado is not going to playing the role of a construction worker turned wrestler like they had originally planned. He's now a teacher by day, wrestler by night. Anyway, the show will be syndicated starting the last week in February and I believe that Lorimar will be handling the syndication package here in the States. Alzado wrestles under a mask (Steve Williams does his wrestling scenes for him) and does a job each week for a well known Crockett star. Ric Flair was in and taped a match (remember this for trivia purposes...when was the first time Flair and Williams met in singles competition) as have Lex Luger and a few of Crockett's other top stars. Dusty Rhodes and the Road Warriors were in to do a locker room scene as were the Kelly Twins. Fred gives the comedy on the show a C+ but a composite grade of a B+. Crockett is prominently featured including his ring apron with NWA written across it. He is helping to produce the show and according to people with the production company, is "in for the duration". Watch your local listings for the debut.

Speaking of TV shows, Global Wrestling, that group that we reported on here several months back that sold over the counter stock, had their TV debut this past week. If the stock market crashes again, we'll know who to blame. They're showing matches that were taped a good six months ago, but pairing them with current interviews (they must have went to the Verne Gagne school of Wrestling Broadcasting). Bob Roop and Rusty Brooks do a segment each week that's a take off of Siskel and Ebert with a thumbs up-thumbs down thing on a current wrestling topic. They will begin running live shows within the next month throughout Florida and if Jeff Bowdren can get up the courage, he'll attempt a report from one of them.

Work on the Yearbook is proceeding painfully slow. I will definitely have the ordering instructions next issue along with the cost. So far we have planned the complete voting results of our year end poll, title histories for every promotion we can find, Ed Garea's thannies, plus a month by month review of each promotion we cover. There will be some other features as well and the thing shold run about 100-110 pages and it will be bound as it was last year with a spiral binding. As soon as I get this bulletin out of the way, I'm going to start working on the yearbook about 4-5 hours a day. We will not have the individual

wrestlers' biographies for the year (or else the yearbook would be done sometime in August) like we did last year. So if you call during the next two weeks and I keep the conversation shorter than usual, please understand. By the way, keep in mind that my hours at work are 3 in the afternoon till 11 at night CENTRAL TIME! Mary says we are getting as many phone calls while I'm at work as when i'm home. Phone number is (309) 289-2662.

Bunches of you have asked us to start a new feature, and with the help of all of you, we will. It will be a "what ever happened to" feature that will run about every three months or so. If you know of a wrestler who has retired and you know what he's doing now, let us know. we'll put everything together for the first time in our February 28th issue. One in particular that a reader has asked about is Cowboy Bob Ellis. If you know anything about him, please let me know.

The Crockett Cup is just a few months away and there's been no official word where it will be this year. they wanted to have it in Japan, but I think they came to their senses on that. latest rumor is that it will be held in Las Vegas.

Here's a couple of reader requests...Ron Arzon of 80 Crestview Ave, Daly City, CA 94015 wants to correspond with wrestling fans who are interested in multi-level marketing (I guess like Amway, Herbalife, etc). And from last issue...FRED HORNBY of 82 Highland Ave, Port Washington, NY 11050 is the person who was looking for the ChiTown Heat program that was sold at Starrcade. He would appreciate hearing from anyone who can help him out.

Some quick notes on the UAWF...all charter members should have received their membership packages by now. If not, contact me. You can still join with basically the same membership benefits by sending \$15.00 for a single membership to UAWF, Box 215, galesburg, IL 61402. Additional members of your family can join for just an additional \$2.00 each. A special thanks to the gang at PRO WRESTLING ILLUSTRATED for getting birthday cards signed for us. Also a thank you to JOE PEDICINO, GORDON SOLIE and BONNI BLACKSTONE for their help with the cards as well. We're really getting a lot of cooperation with this. Anyone with access to the media (TV, radio, newspapers) can really help us out by letting people know about the UAWF. If you'd like more information on the organization send a long self addressed stamped envelope to the above address.

More Memphis stuff...Renegades Chewing tobacco (or snuff or whatever it is) is sponsoring a tournament with the Memphis group. Winner will receive \$250,000, and will be determined on a point system. matches in the tournament will take place all around the Memphis circuit, not just in Memphis. Eddie Marlin claims that jimmy valiant and Koko Ware have both contacted them about coming in for the tourney. Koko? Maybe we'll have more on this next issue...

Some quick Continental news...Humongous has defeated Danny davis for the championship there. He is now involved in a series of loser leave town matches with strongman Doug Furnas. Interesting that the outcome will be different around the horn. In the northern half of the territory, Furnas will win (the other Knoxville is one of those towns) and Humongous will win in the southern half (Birmingham). This has something to do with the split in ownership of the promotion. I'll try to have more on this next time too.

Boy! Where does the space go. We're out of room this time. I will be in Chicago on the 25th but I will be very short on time. Contact me before then if you want to get together sometime that afternoon or early evening and we'll see if I can work it in. I can't tell you exactly why I'm going, but I will next time. For now let's just say my fairy-godmother has waved her magic wand...

See y'all in a couple of weeks. Bye.

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